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China Is Awakening

According to William E. Curtis, reform is already making tremendous progress in China, without any revolution. It is coming through the hardy old Empress Dowager, who in her seventieth year is turning from her youthful prejudices against foreign devils and is now disposed to welcome modern education and modern inventions. According to this authority the days of chopping off the heads of such men as Kang Yu Wei or Leong Chi Tso, the young Chinese who was here several years ago fleeing from a country whose government stood ready to pay \$50,000 for his head, is gone. The empress has not only abated her ardor in having heads chopped off whenever those heads become civilized, but she is going farther in adopting civilization herself than any of them did. Can it be possible that this old lady of seventy has been impressed by Japan's example and thinks that the awakening made possible by the remarkable intellectual liberality of Emperor Mutsu-hito should be repeated among her 400,000,000 subjects?

About six years ago the Emperor of China, supposed to be the ruler of that mysterious land, promulgated a series of reform edicts which threatened to modernize China. He was then under the influence of Kang Yu Wei. In some way or other the iron hand of the Empress reached out and suppressed the Emperor just as he was budding into a progressive ruler. A hundred thousand dollars were offered for his chief adviser's head and the imperial axemen chopped off about twenty heads which thought as did Kang Yu Wei. The Emperor retired into a shell and the world came to realize that the real ruler of China was a remarkable old woman who had risen from obscurity to the throne even in that land of classes. All this was only six years ago, and yet the Empress herself is now issuing liberal edicts, is aiding the cause of education and has placed in power a lot of viceroys who are patrons of science and foreign education. She has completely changed her attitude towards foreigners and freely receives them into her sacred presence, even conversing with them. A short time ago an American lady passed through Honolulu after painting a picture of the aged ruler, and declared that the Empress was a nice, amiable person, and that the stories about her tyranny and cruelty were all untrue, so there! There are some beheaded occupants of graves in Peking, who died with excellent reasons for holding the other view, but it is remarkable enough change that the Empress should allow any foreign artist to see her at all. One of the diplomatic rows of the past was over the fact that the sacred presence could never be entered, even by ambassadors. Today the Empress receives constant visits from the wife of the American minister at Peking and holds long chats with her. It is difficult to imagine a more extraordinary change at such a time of life. Mrs. Conger is said to be quite a favorite with the old lady and of course is willing to overlook such unpleasant things as those graves at Peking and a few earlier incidents in the life of the wary hostess, which she herself probably does not now regard as good form.

All this looks like the beginning of a very real awakening of China. One year from next January, we are told, a series of changes even more radical than those proposed by the would-be emperor are going into effect, for the grand old lady of China is nothing if not thorough. She is going to do away with the old official system, for example, and require candidates for office, or for promotion in office, to pass examinations in the sciences. Instead of familiarity with Confucius, which has ever been the supreme test of ability to rule, general modern educational tests will be applied. The viceroys are favoring education. Already the edicts which encouraged the sciences in 1898 and which the Empress quickly withdrew, have been reissued.

The history of Japan has shown what a generation of encouragement of education can do. Can it be that China is quietly beginning the same career? If so it is not at all unlikely that the present war did much to change the Empress' views. She must have been profoundly impressed by seeing her smaller neighbor Japan grapple with Russia, the terror of the Orient, and thrash her on land and sea. If Japan why not China, must have been the thought. Its result may prove to be the great "awakening of China," which has been predicted so long, usually with more or less dread. The civilized nations have insisted upon it and probably it is coming. The next fifty years may reveal whether the yellow awakening is a peril or not.

Airships Too Much Balloon

Crowds of people at St. Louis stood and enthusiastically applauded aeronauts who made short trips to and fro above their city in machines held in the air by means of great bags of gas, just as the people of Paris a couple of years ago cheered Santos Dumont. They seemed to see success in a problem centuries old, but success is a long way off. The inventors have progressed a good deal in the last few years and seem to have succeeded at last in making airships that will "fly" and can be controlled as to direction even in the face of fairly strong winds. In all of them the lifting is done by huge bags of gas, however, and this gives them a clumsiness that is fatal to the scheme. Baldwin's airship is an entertaining toy, but he is not much nearer a practical solution of the problem of aerial navigation than his predecessors of many years ago.

It does not seem likely that the balloon idea will ever develop into a successful airship. It has been experimented with by a long line of inventors and nearly all have failed in the same way. The machines will not stay up, or they are uncontrollable, or if partially controllable, they are soon out of gear somewhere or other and are always at the mercy of a strong wind. The successful inventor of an airship, if there ever is one, will probably be a man who abandons the gasbag idea in toto, and approaches the problem in some new way. No one can say what way, for that would be to invent the machine. It is not probable that the world will ever see a machine dependent for buoyancy upon a vast storage of gas which can be handled for the practical purposes of aerial travel and transportation of freight. For that matter it is hardly conceivable that there will ever be machines of such practical use, but no one can say what the future will bring. One fact does seem to stand forth, even without the proofs given by many failures, and that is that the gasbag idea is not the right one. The proportion which the necessary weight of machine bears to the extent of gasbag surface required to float it, makes all the machines in existence consist largely of a huge inflated ball which is merely a plaything for the wind.

Should Hawaii Exhibit?

Though the St. Louis Exposition is not yet over, preparations for another large one are well under way. This time it is to be in Portland, Oregon. While it will not be as big as the one at St. Louis, which is by far the largest ever given and which is not likely to be surpassed for a long time, it will be as large as the Buffalo Exposition, to which Hawaii sent an exhibit, and it will probably be a very attractive one. A million dollars is to be spent on it. The enclosure has already been fenced in and it occupies a model site for such an enterprise. There are 185 acres of land and 350 acres of water in the enclosure, and the like will naturally add greatly to the attractiveness of the general scheme of buildings and grounds. For scenery the location is claimed by Portland citizens to be unsurpassed anywhere. Nine mountain peaks white with snow mark the horizon.

There are to be ten buildings on the grounds of the exposition and a good

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AGENTS

Deal of work has already been done on them. The various states have been invited to make exhibits and it is understood that all of them will do so, many using some of the material which they now have at St. Louis. That the exhibition will attract large crowds, especially from the Western portion of the United States, goes without saying, and it would probably pay Hawaii to secure some space. Portland is much nearer to us than St. Louis, and the cost of sending an exhibit would be much less. At the same time the chance of receiving benefits would be greater. Hawaii could scarcely hope to attract much notice in the vast exposition at St. Louis, but at Portland the such an exhibit as Hawaii could send would probably be an interesting feature of the show. As an advertisement of Hawaii, a place among the various state exhibits, at which the proper kind of literature could be distributed, would be likely to do much good. Portland's exhibition opens next June, and is in celebration of the Lewis and Clark exploration journey in the Northwest, in the days of President Jefferson.

Voting machine laws and primary election laws are proper subjects for members of the legislature to be considering. Hawaii is behind the times regarding both.

According to London papers Manila is the place where the Russian Baltic squadron expects to get coal. It is stated that a large number of vessels have left Wales this summer with cargoes of coal secretly purchased by Russia, the vessels being under instructions to make Manila a rendezvous. Some such plan must be in the minds of the Russians if they are really sending the Baltic vessels to the Far East.

Sugar still goes up and the planters ought to have a happy annual meeting. Will it fall when Hawaii begins to send her next crop East?

The Associated Press account of the loss of the Yashima is apparently official and it is framed in very positive language. The correspondents who reported seeing five battleships in Togo's fleet some time after the date of the reported sinking of the battleship, may have been deceived by cruisers or other vessels which were pointed out to them as the five battleships. It speaks volumes, however, for Japanese censorship if the news is really true. The loss of a battleship must necessarily have been known to most of the rest of the fleet and to many sailors. It is scarcely conceivable that the families of those who went down with the Yashima have been kept in ignorance five months, and the news must have circulated in Japan. The reported loss is a serious one to Japan, for she is badly outclassed in battleship strength without the Yashima. It is not likely that Togo will be willing to give battle to the new Russian squadron. There will be some lively naval strategy and exciting maneuvering in eastern waters

Classified Ads in Star.

Lost

On Wednesday evening, in the city, a plain gold cross, about 1 1/4 inches long, containing another cross inside, \$5 reward on return to Hawaiian Hotel.

A topaz brooch between Liliha street and Thomas square suitable reward by returning to S. G. Wilder.

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SENATOR McCANDLESS HAS A PLAN TO PROMOTE SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Hon. L. L. McCandless, one of the holdover Senators for the Island of Oahu, believes that some certain provision for a positive movement in the direction of local control of territorial affairs should be made to forestall any possibility of a breakdown of the county act. Says Senator McCandless:

"I am of the opinion that road matters are closer to the people of the outer districts than any other one thing. Therefore I am in favor of an act which will provide for the election of a road superintendent or supervisor for each district throughout the islands. In order to avoid interference in any remote way or manner with the Organic act provisions defining the duties of the Superintendent of Public Works I would have these various superintendents of roads under the direct control of the Superintendent of Public Works in the matter of all expenditures and in the making of contracts. I think this would fully safeguard the people, would retain to the head of the department the duties vested in him by Congress and in the operation of such a law as I propose the people would have practically direct control in that they would select at the ballot box the man to look after their highways. If the county act should fall after it had become a law and an election had been held we would still have a very fair commencement in the direction we wish to move."

Senator McCandless says that a number of legislators and public men have expressed approval of his course.

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